

EXCURSION TO CHELTENHAM.—BOTANY (ORCHIDS).

ON Saturday, 1st October, considering the splendid afternoon only a few members—four in all—put in an appearance at the Cheltenham station (owing, probably, to the train leaving Melbourne at ten minutes past 1, being too early for most members). Anyhow, those who attended had a very successful afternoon, 18 species of orchids in flower being collected in the three hours, amongst which may be mentioned *Thelymitra aristata*, *T. antennifera*, *T. longifolia*, *Caladenia patersoni* (several varieties), *C. menziesii*, *C. deformis*, *C. latifolia*, *Diuris longifolia* (a patch about two feet square contained fully one hundred specimens, mostly in flower), *D. pedunculata*, *Pterostylis barbata*, *P. pedunculata*, *Prasophyllum elatum* (green and brownish varieties), *Lyperanthus nigricans*, and other commoner species. The heath ground near Cheltenham at the present time presents a beautiful appearance, and will repay anyone interested in native flowers to visit the locality, fully 60 species of plants being noticed in flower (not including the orchids) during our few hours' ramble. I may mention that on the two orchid excursions to Sandringham and Cheltenham no less than 25 species of orchids were collected in flower.—C. FRENCH, jun.

VARIATIONS IN WURMBEA DIOICA.

(Communicated to the Club, 12th September, 1892.)

BARON VON MUELLER, in his "Fragmenta," mentions that this species sometimes has 2 or 4 carpels and 7 or 8 segments of the perianth. Bentham mentions that it is a very variable species. I have examined a large number of specimens collected indiscriminately near Brighton, and find the carpels frequently 2, 4, or 5, with 4 to 8 perianth segments, these variations occurring separately or together, but when both vary it is in the same direction. The number of stamens is sometimes increased to 7, 8, or 9. I found one flower with 5 sepals, 5 petals, 10 stamens, and 5 carpels. The anthers are sometimes 4-lobed instead of 2. These variations may affect all or some only of the flowers in the spike, and different flowers to different extents, but in the same direction. About 21 per cent. of the pistillate spikes vary in some way, and 14 per cent. of the total number. Variations also occur in the colouring of the flowers, the most usual being that the ring is divided into dots. The whole of the perianth is sometimes tinted with a ring of darker colour. In a few flowers the ring was absent or very pale, rarely yellow. These variations in colour affect the whole spike alike. I found one spike branched.—THOMAS S. HART.